Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0420CA-1 for Galt Joint Union School District

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	10

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Galt Joint Union Elementary School District has established a comprehensive, high quality reform vision built on professional development, teacher and leader effectiveness evaluation system, assessment and the use of the Common Core State Standards. Multiple plans and resources are developed and multiple layers of foundational projects have been completed. The core concept of personalized learning plan implementation is focused on college and career readiness.

The focus on community involvement with service learning projects and the use of community resources is notable, as based on student interest. The development of Bright Future Centers with extended opportunities for students and parents fills the gap for access and support for all students and families. It provides the contact with professionals and extended learning with a focus on college and career strategies of community, planning, and critical thinking.

Teacher effeceiveness is improved through professional development with blended learning opportunities. A collaborative culture is established to build capacity and growth for teachers and leaders.

A focus on student data that is accessible to teachers, students and parents is addressed though the projects. Technology is enhanced and utilized for blended learning for students and teachers. The District has already closed low performing schools and reassigned teachers as part of work already completed.

(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	8

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

GJUESD is submitting a comprehensive plan for all schools in LEA. All schools are qualified by the benchmark set for high need. District has 65% of students qualified for Free and Reduced Lunch Program.

a-All schools are eligible and will be participating.

b-A list of schools is attached minus the pre-school. Reference is made to the preschool in multiple sections of the grant as a participant in activities and funding. Goals are established and assessments are discussed for this school but it is not reflected in enrollment figures.

c-Table complete with the requested student and teacher data.

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	8

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant describes how all elementary students transition to one middle and to a shared high school district. They are willing to share success with other schools districts advancing students to the same high school, the high school and nationally.

The model for change is descriptive with key components leading to personalized learning as the key change factor but does not lead to measureable outcomes showing increased student achievement resulting in college and career readiness for all students. Lacking is a narrative that describes how the logic model leads to success with college and career.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	9

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

GJUESD goals or benchmarks are not summarized in the narrative. Achievement goals are realistic to each sub populations, and the gap reduction is realistic.

a-Performance for proficiency and growth displayed on data sheet for pre-k to 8th grade with a 10% goal.

b-Projections for reducing achievement gap are ambitious but realistic based on the baseline data provided.

c/d-Since this is an elementary/middle school district, this information is not provided. Explanation as to why the information not provided is lacking.

B. Prior Record of Success and Conditions for Reform (45 total points)

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	14

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

1- The applicant has provided evidence that it has utilized reform strategies to improve student achievement.

a-Data details the proficiency improvement over four years for all populations and provides data on the success of closing the achievement gaps. As an elementary/middle school district no data is provided for high school graduation rate or college enrollment data and no reference is made to the availability or collectability of this data.

b-An ambitious reform plan was put into place in 2008 to close a low performing school and to merge two middle schools, one low performing, while transfering teachers elsewhere within the district. New teacher evaluation plans were put into place with personalized support.

c-Sound data sharing with parents based on the student/parent portal and use of dashboard for teachers to analyze data.

	Available	Score
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	5

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

GJUESD has demonstrated transparency by having information on the District's web site for each school site. A high quality level of transparancy is lacking based on no practices and investments included for non-salary information.

District website shows:

a-school level salaries

b-all instructional salaries/ no breakout of support staff.

c-teachers salaries

d-non-personnel expenditures

	Available	Score
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	10

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

GJUESD describes the authorities for accountability through the state accountability system for API,and references ESEA accountability for AYP and the California Education Code that provides the goal for success for all students.The plan was sent for review to the State point of contact, the State Board of Education and the State Department of Education. The applicant can move forward with the implementation of the plan for personalized learning enviornments.

	Available	Score
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	8

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

GJUESD details the interactive process used for feedback and engagement of school district, community and bargaining unit inclusion in the process.

a-School level engagement in the process is evident but only through focus groups and advisory committees. Student representation is only evident by one student leader at a RTTD focus group.

i-Collective bargaining unit communication is described but without confirmation of commitment or support with a letter of support. Application is signed.

b- Community support is strongly evident based on the comprehensive collection of letters of support from government and community stakeholders.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	5

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

GJUESD has provided a high quality plan for analysis significant to implementing personalized learning environments through a review of student performance, data analysis and stakeholder feedback. Attention is given to focusing the plan on the gaps with implementation strategies.

C. Preparing Students for College and Careers (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	19

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

GJUESD presents a plan with input from key community and district stakeholders to individualize student learning based on academic need and identified social/ emotional strengths. It is unclear how the assessment of strengths will result in modifications to the Student Learning Plan or Personalized Learning Plan. The Bright Futures Center functions as a year round, extended day student support center with trained professionals available to meet the individual learning needs.

a-Bright Futures Center and team assessments of individual needs is shared with parent and child and basis for students' understanding.

ii-Blended learning opportunities is basis for college and career readiness through common core standards.

iii- Proposal focuses on optional learning experiences in areas of academic interest. The personalized plan is monitored by a team of professionals and modified to include strategies that lead to accountability for college and career readiness.

iv-Connection is stong to expose to diverse context, culture and perspecitves to motivate learning with optional family-centered intergenerational, multicultural and international service learning activities.

v-The academic content will show mastery through virtual, classroom and blended rubrics and assessments for accountability building on skills and traits.

b- The Bright Futures Center is proposed as the connection for parents and students.

i-Automated personalized learning plans based on mastery of content and strength based opportunities for service learning.

ii-Use of personalized learning plans will be monitored by a team of professionals consisting of social worker, counselor and service learning coordinator who will make a match for the service learning opportunity for the family and see the project through with instructional approaches matched to the activity and the students needs.

iii-The use of digital portfolio's, performance rubrics and assessments will support the high quality content based on high quality opportunities.

iv- Project based learning and blended learning with assessments is the basis of the plan focused on the new common core standards. Personalized learning recommendations based on teams made up of counselor, social worker, teacher and coordinator.

v- High needs students including migrant, ELL, special needs and Hispanic, will be supported with a high quality team made up of counselor, social worker, special ed teacher and project coordinator.

c-The Bright Futures Center is targeted as the resource for students and families. Technology is available to connect students virtually and there is face to face support for the use of the technology is availabe to students and families.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	19

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

GJUESD has a plan for professional development to increase teacher proficiency in using data. Professional Learning Communities will be used as a forum to review data and match instructional strategies with student needs. Principal training appears to be virtual or online without benchmark growth for principals.

a-Professional Learning Communities (PLC) are evident and sound as a strategy to improve teacher effectiveness in conjunction with a teacher effectiveness system.

i-PLC structure supports teacher improvement, focus on students, focused on lowest performing, and moving all students forward.

ii-Teachers will use blended learning opportunities for professional development including virtual, face to face, and feedback.

iii-Rationale for selection of assessments show what method will be used to measure goals toward college and career.

iv-Teacher personalized learning is approrpriately focused on the result of the educator effectiveness system

b-i-Teachers use resources as identified in blended learning plan to match resources to student need

ii/iii-New Longitudnal data system will provide looped data to support plan is establishing college and career goals.

c-Teaching and Leading Action Plan is focused on professional development and evaluation system.

i/ii-Principals utilize the teacher effectiveness process to assist teachers in building capacity toward educator engagement in the personalized learning environment. There is a plan to increase the access and knowledge of teachers in the use of tools, data and resources for accelerating student progress. A plan is also in place for leaders to have access to training and resources for individual student needs.

d- A high quality plan is in place for personalized learning for adults to increase the effectiveness of teachers and to inform them of what they need to improve to move students forward with their goals toward college and career readiness. Interventions are in place for teachers who cannot meet conditions set forth through the evaluation system to be effective and highly effective.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	15

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

GJUESD has a strong structure in place to support the plan as proposed for increasing student achievement through personalized learning plans.

a- District level support is documented that will support implementation in all schools

b-Authority is detailed for the flexibility for budget and structure to implement each school plan.

c-Authority to progress students based on mastery is allowed through policy.

d- The use of blended learning and multiple assessments are the specified method for demonstrating mastery. Principal has the authority to progress student to next grade based on mastery.

e-Commitment is made to accessibility to all learning for all students.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	9

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

GJUESD infrastructure adequately supports personalized learning plans-

a- The Bright Futues Centers provided academic and social/emotional support through an onsite and virtual support team through extended school and evening hours.

b-The support mechanism is described as staffing in the Bright Futures Centers. Highly qualified teachers available online

and at site.

c-A student learning plan and data is available and accessible for students and parents.

d-Capabilities for data upload is supported but further work needed is documented in the action plan.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	15

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

GJUESD is building on what they have used in the past and has an strong e plan for continuous improvement. Continuous improvement is based on monitoring, modifying and sharing details of the plan during the interim that lead to substitive changes. Various stakeholder meetings will provide the forum for sharing information. PLC's and teacher meetings will provide feedback, and leadership will accept feedback from the staff. A strong plan is in place for sharing of information with stakeholders.

	Available	Score
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	5

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

GJUESD has extensive opportunities to engage with internal and external shareholders as listed in the table accompanying the narrative. Opportunities for feedback include staff meetings, family nights, school site councils, forums, surveys, open comment, open board meetings. Information will be communicated through face to face, and webpage for schools and district, local news media, and various meetings.

	Available	Score
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	5

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Performance measures for all grade spans are included for a strong performance plan that meets the minimum requirement.

a- Stong rationale is provided on the selection of the K-1assessment and its alignment to standards and outcomes.

b-Trimester assessments support ability to make decisions about the action plan and areas of concern.

c-Justified that district level assessments can be adjusted and modified over time to transfer from CA state standards to CA Common Core State Standards.

	Available	Score
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	5

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Strong plan to evaluate the effectiveness of the investment. Documents involvement of all stakeholdersand describes multiple measures of input. Use of an external evaluator will enhance the feedback loop for assessing the effectiveness of the investments.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	10

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Extensive budgets provided to support the overall grant request based on projects.

a- All funds are identified that will support the project

b-Is sufficient and reasonable to support the proposal

c-Describes other resources that will be used in the community partnerships for implementation and the financial commitment being made by these entitites.

i-provides total revenue

ii- identifies one time investments.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	**10**	**9**

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

A detailed and high quality plan for sustainability is provided. Building capacity of existing resources and realignment of existing resouces is the focused plan for sustainability. Federal and state funding will be used to sustain and support projects. Lack evidence to support the sustainability of the programs past the final year of the grant. The funds are identified in the chart but the funding sources are not identified.

Service learning projects are supported by other local funds and other funding sources.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	**10**	**9**

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

Applicant has a coherent plan for partnering with community agencies and other funded programs/resources to provide a supportive network of service for multiple high need populations that will lead to improvement in student learning. Populations targeted are migrant, English language learners and special needs students. Basis for the plan is the family-centered interenational, multicultural opportunitites provided by the Bright Futures year round program. Partnering with community resources for year round opportunities is a strong strategy. Backing up those opportunities with access for all students and families to a student support center makes for a good partnership. Use of assessments for individual growth tie in to the improvement strategies for the overall continuous improvement process. Revisiting goals and objectives will be part of the personalized learning plans.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	**Met/Not Met**	**Met**

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

Applicant has met the absolute priority to provide a comprehensive plan to open opportunity through community collaboration and personalized learning enivronments for student learning.

Total	**210**	**197**

Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0420CA-2 for Galt Joint Union School District

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	10

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

This proposal demonstrated a comprehensive, innovative and thorough approach. The applicant has set forth an outstanding reform vision that is unique and builds on solid accomplishment under adverse conditions. This district has a poverty rate of 65% and the area has an unemployment rate of 17% and yet, last year, the district tied for highest academic performance index rating in the county. It has set up a school readiness center for pre-kindergarten students and even conducts an assessment of their needs before they enter kindergarten so that they can be better served as soon as possible.

Unique features of the proposed project include transforming school libraries into blended personalized learning and enrichment centers with expanded hours for students, their families and all community members and not only administering a strength-finder assessment to all educators, board members and students, but also sharing the results.

	Available	Score
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	10

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant's process for selecting schools to participate is one of including all students in every school in the district as there is such a large percentage of high-need students in each school and the effort is a community-wide one. All requisite lists are included: the schools that will be participating, i.e., all of them; the percentages of participating students from low-income families and who are high-needs and the number of participating teachers.

	Available	Score
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	9

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The district's high-quality plan could have been better presented (summarized, defined, explained).   There is, however, no doubt that the applicant is already providing for meaningful district-wide reform.   Further, the applicant is committed to scaling up its proposal by sharing results not only with neighboring LEAs, but also with the national K -12 community and provides several avenues for doing so.

	Available	Score
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	10

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

This proposal includes copious detail of the numerous assessments used to measure all students' progress toward meeting the districts' goals. All students are assessed three times a year to ensure that their community-based personalized learning model is producing the necessary student growth for future success in college or a career – bright futures for Galt students. Assessments are given often and measure even subsets of skills such as various times tables.   Results are carefully monitored and instruction adjusted accordingly. The district sets as an overall goal for the district a 15% reduction in achievement gaps and more specific goals for reducing achievement gaps for each sub group. The strong efforts that this elementary/middle school district is making to form a solid foundation for its students and transition them successfully into the higher grades likely will result in much improved graduation and college enrollment rates.

B. Prior Record of Success and Conditions for Reform (45 total points)

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	15

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides multiple indicators, presenting a clear record of success. For all students and every sub group and for every school, including the one with the lowest Academic Performance Index, the percentage of students scoring proficient or above on the STAR state assessment has increased in both language arts and math during the last four years. Further, each of the schools has exceeded the state's Academic Performance Index target, some by quite a bit. And, between 2010-2011 and 2011-12, the district closed the achievement gap in English Language Arts and Math for all sub groups.

The district has achieved significant reforms. It has implemented professional learning communities; instigated programs for developing healthy and engaged youth; reorganized school buildings, creating a readiness center; developed a new teacher evaluation system; expanded school readiness services in parenting education and family literacy and health screenings; and created a jumpstart kindergarten summer transition program.

Extensive performance data is readily available and, along with standards-based report cards, customized reports are developed for parents that are accessible on an on-line Parent Portal.

	Available	Score
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	5

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The district's high level of transparency is evident with its publishing on its website and on each individual School Accountability Report Card the expenditure data regarding the four required categories, including teachers' salaries for each site in comparison with state averages.

	Available	Score
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	10

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant explains the state and federal legal, statutory and regulatory requirements that make possible successful conditions for the district to implement what it is proposing. The applicant also explains that the district submitted its proposal to the State for it to voice any concerns about it or raise any objections to it and the State, after reviewing the proposal, voiced none.

	Available	Score
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	10

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides extensive evidence of specific, meaningful opportunities for various stakeholders to participate in the formulation of the proposal: on-going board meetings, a Race-to-the-Top focus group and a combined city and schools group that involved wide representation of city officials, business, community leaders, etc. Teachers were involved with union

representation present at the inception of the plan in the RTT-D proposal focus group as well as on the District Advisory Committee. District teachers were kept up-to-date as the plan took shape in summer and fall discussions and during their bargaining sessions. In addition, The State teachers' union met with local union specifically to discuss the plan prior to approving it. Numerous letters from a wide range of organizations and institutions offer strong support.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	5

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant wisely sought extensive input on which to base a plan. The needs identified by stakeholders in a variety of meetings, including one with the Cities and Schools Together (CAST), form much of the logic for the district's high-quality plan. The needs and gaps identified to be addressed emphasize the transitions from pre-k to kindergarten, elementary to middle school, and middle school to high school; aligning assessments and organizing data management to effectively support personalized learning; and utilizing resources wisely to support the implementation of the new Common Core Standards. These goals are reflected in six action plans in the proposal.

C. Preparing Students for College and Careers (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	19

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The district demonstrates that it has a high-quality plan with its wide array of strategies and opportunities for all district students to ensure that they have what is needed for improving their learning and teaching by personalizing their learning environment to give them the support that they need to become college and career ready. Examples of what the district offers to help students develop successfully by offering them deep learning experiences include a year-round classroom and individually paced digital literacy and math programs. An example of the variety of quality instructional approaches and environments and access to diverse cultures afforded students includes an international student exchange for students with disabilities held at a nearby wild life refuge. Also, beginning in pre-kindergarten, educators involve students and their parents in a variety of age-appropriate efforts to engage them in developing an individualized plan for each student that includes not only academic progress but also social and emotional needs, all of which are regularly assessed and accordingly modified. These efforts also help students to understand that what they learn and accomplish will determine their ability to function successfully in life. In addition, the district uses ongoing and regular feedback including student data to help determine student progress toward achieving college and career readiness and to personalize recommendations for students based on current knowledge and skills.

Evidence that students know how to track and use the resources provided them to improve their learning would have strengthened the proposal.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	20

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has a very well thought-out, rich plan with some unique features and numerous components to help educators improve instruction by personalizing learning environments so that students will be better able to meet college and career ready standards. The proposal definitely meets all the Teaching and Leading criteria.   Some examples:

To improve teachers' and principals' practice and effectiveness, the district:

- is using Teacher Leaders as Curriculum Coaches to implement Common Core Standards
- is providing numerous professional development opportunities including access to an educator effectiveness system, which provides training, data and amazing digital tools and resources. These will allow district educators to greatly enhance their own capacities that will in turn, enable them to accelerate their students' progress in successfully taking advantage of post-secondary options. Implementing this effectiveness system will make possible greatly increased productivity, e.g., not only does it include 2,000 professional development video learning segments by 120 experts, but also it gives administrators an effective accountability tool - the ability to track the progress of teachers in the use of the system.
- Uses status and completion dashboards in each school to give at-a-glance insights into the effectiveness of professional development efforts.
- has instituted Professional Learning Communities at all levels that will result in progress in many areas

To better personalize instruction, student progress will be frequently measured, including the use of adaptive testing, so that students can have their instruction adjusted accordingly.

To show the thoroughness of the district's approach even Board Members' evaluations are included.

By fully implementing this thorough plan, the district will increase the number of students receiving instruction from effective and highly effective educators.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	15

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The Superintendent has organized central office into three departments: Curriculum and Instruction, Educational Services and Business Services and these departments, in turn, carry out the necessary policies and provide the support services needed to facilitate personalized learning for the district's students.

School Site Councils composed of the principal, staff and parents will have the flexibility and autonomy to devise and operate personalized learning practices, decide on site-based budget expenditures and make personnel decisions. Authority is cited for these councils to coordinate the grant funds with other funding.

There is a school policy in place that permits students to be accelerated based on demonstrated mastery of material. The virtual learning courses that will be offered to help implement personalized learning plans and the computer adaptive assessments that will be used will make flexibility in demonstrating mastery possible. The California code gives districts the ability to generate multiple measures of pupil achievement. As this is an elementary/middle school district, acceleration can occur based on mastery, but credits are not offered at this level. The district understands, supports and has in place adaptable resources that are fully accessible to all students.

	Available	Score
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	10

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

By transforming school libraries located throughout the district into blended learning centers with extended hours and appropriate technical support, parents, educators, students and other stakeholders will have access to the resources needed to implement the proposal.

The district either already has or shortly will have in place interoperable data systems. In addition, the California Longitudinal Achievement Data system will be uploading student information data and statewide assessment data five times yearly to allow

comparisons of district progress with that of other similar districts in the state. An Action Plan for Enhancing Policy and Infrastructure is included.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	15

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

One of the greatest strengths of this proposal is the district's capability of continuously and robustly monitoring its performance and its willingness to do so. As their city manager pointed out in his letter of support, he has worked with many school districts and never met a group more committed to re-examining what they do and how they do it. Their continuous improvement process builds on their current practice of involving various stakeholders in monitoring, measuring and publicly sharing information in various venues and then incorporating that information in an improvement cycle that involves weekly teacher collaboration meetings, trimester reports and discussions among the superintendent, board members, administrators and principals.

	Available	Score
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	5

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant demonstrates a high-quality approach using many engagement and ongoing communication strategies and makes use of many available means of connecting with internal and external stakeholders such as the local news media and meetings of various organizations. Through surveys and numerous opportunities to offer feedback, the district aims to continuously improve its plan.

	Available	Score
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	5

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has provided ambitious yet achievable performance measures for all sub groups and for different grade levels. The measures include ones that show not only the importance of academic achievement but also great insight into what supports such achievement: pre-school assessments of skill levels and developmental profiles, end-of –the-year effort grades in reading and self and social development measures. All the required information is addressed including rationales, descriptions and considerations for all measures.

	Available	Score
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	4

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant's evaluation plan is a good one as the district will be working with an expert external evaluator and a preeminent educational research and development organization and an action plan was provided. The proposal could have been strengthened even more had it clearly and directly addressed the criterion of whether or not time staff, money or other resources could be used in a more productive manner (and changes made where they were not).

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	**10**	**9**

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Given the demands for personnel and equipment necessary to effect the changes contained in the applicant's ambitious plan, the budget seems to be thoroughly thought out and reasonable. The only component this reviewer could not find was a stated rationale.

	Available	Score
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	**10**	**10**

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant includes several on-going funding sources including local, county, state and federal funds that will support the sustainability of various aspects of the plan and points out that as internal capacity is increased, the need for outside support services will decrease and costs will be reduced.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	**10**	**10**

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

Given the demographics of this community and its socio-economic status, the applicant has been forming partnerships with other groups in the community for some time to augment district resources so as to better meet the wide range of student needs. Sixteen partnerships are identified to work with English Learners, migrant populations, the disabled, foster care, etc. to improve a variety of outcomes such as students' pre-K readiness, family literacy and community members' access to a range of social services.

The district has a firm grasp of how to track selected indicators that measure results and use data to make the best use of its resources to meet student needs including those of their high percentage of high-need students. In addition to transforming its school libraries into year-round, after school facilities to better integrate with other community literacy, arts and career resources, the applicant lists several other integrating partnerships with agencies, family events, parent classes, etc. These partnerships will help to build staff capacity to use digital resources, apply strengths-based leadership strategies and make better use of data management tools to improve results over time.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	**Met/Not Met**	**Met**
Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:		

The Absolute Priority is met as the applicant provides sufficient information and ample detail not only about what this small district with enormous challenges – the very kinds that the four assurance areas were meant to address – has already managed to accomplish, but also about what it plans along with the creative strategies and exacting tools it will employ to carry out those plans.

Total		210	206

Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0420CA-3 for Galt Joint Union School District

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	10

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The district articulates a clear and comprehensive vision. It provides thorough background information on its student population, change in demographics, student achievement needs, and a clear explanation of why it submitted the RTT application. The connection to the superintendent's vision for the district, Culture of 7, is explained in detail and referenced throughout the RTT grant. Each core area of the districts vision is thoroughly explained. The vision is connected to the districts standards and assessments; the Common Core and College Readiness Standards; and how the expected outcomes are used to promote high expectations. The use of data analysis to monitor student progress toward district and state goals is clearly articulated, along with how all staff are held accountable for student achievement. Also compelling to this section of the grant is a clear description of how the district is moving toward increased student choice and flexibility for their learning. The district clearly articulates ambitious and specific non-negotiables to support them in closing the achievement gap and turning around its lowest performing schools. The focus is on early readiness at the Kindergarten level to College Readiness by the time students reach high school. This section of the district's RTT application also has an entire section devoted to clearly explaining its focus on personalized learning and how it plans to accomplish this in the district. Overall, the district's vision is very clear and is centered around student achievement.

(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	9

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The district's plan includes participating schools that meet the RTT eligibility requirements and the participating schools meet the 40 percent low income requirement. Its application addresses the student achievement needs of the entire school system, PK-8, with a focus on personalized learning. The names of the participating schools, grade levels, and school demographics are articulated in table format. Since the district has a large number of English Language Learners, migrant students, and students with disabilities, these groups represent their high-needs population at each of the schools. The district does not have a high school; instead, there is a high school district that the students transition to, once they finish middle school. They have five elementary schools, one middle school, and one school readiness center for pre-school children.   The district states that its RTT grant focuses on personalized learning Pre-k to grade eight; and their application includes performance measures for pre-school children too; thus, it is unclear as to why the district did not include the number of students and demographic data in the table for the pre-school readiness center. Clarity of this information would have helped the district to receive the top score for this section.

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	8

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The district articulates its commitment to communication with other LEAs who send students to the high school district; virtual or on-sight visits from the superintendent; reaching out to other public schools and charter schools; webinars and webcasts to share ideas; and sharing project approaches through city partnerships and partnering with other districts.   A graphic (figure) is included that articulates the goals for providing personalized learning. However, the district does not include a narrative that explains its outcomes for personalized learning nor how the reform will be scaled up to provide meaningful reform beyond grades PK-8. This section does not include an explanation of how the district planned to scale up support to ensure that middle school students were ready for high school; as well as an explanation of how the district's plan would address student achievement needs in the high school district to ensure students were career and college ready. A detailed description of how the district's plan would help it reach expected outcomes would have made this section stronger.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	8

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The district includes a description of its student assessment program in the appendix section. It states that personalized learning plans will document progress of system goals. It includes a detailed list of all assessments given and expected results. A data chart also outlines expected progress from 2012-2017 and includes baseline data for 2011-2012. The percentages are reasonable and articulate the expected rate of closing the achievement gap over time. The inclusion of an action plan that describes how the district will accomplish its vision provides further clarity on the district's goals for improved outcomes. What is missing from this section is the inclusion of goals for graduation rates and college enrollment. There is also insufficient information to determine if the goals for summative assessments and decreasing the achievement gaps were equal to or exceeded the State ESEA targets.

B. Prior Record of Success and Conditions for Reform (45 total points)

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	15

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The district clearly articulates its record of success and conditions for reform. It includes a wealth of data in the Appendix to show students' progress over time, and the information is detailed showing that the district has improved student learning outcomes and is closing their achievement gap. The data charts that are included have the percentage of improvement and decrease in the achievement gap from 2008 to 2012. The largest increase is 14 for socio-economically disadvantaged students and largest decrease is for English Language learners and socio-economic students. The district has developed a track record portfolio that identifies its challenges, presents data trends over time, and states its goals for student success. A detailed explanation follows of its students' progress and includes charts with percentages of performance for four years. The district clearly describes its achievement between its lowest and highest subgroups.Their subgroups include Latino, White, Socio-economically disadvantaged, English Language Learners, and students with disabilities. There are no African American students in the district.

An good explanation of the STAR assessment that the students take to assess their progress in Language Arts and Math annually is included. The district provides an explanation of how one of its middle and elementary schools was in the advanced stages of improvement, but through district restructuring of the middle schools and through stakeholder collaboration, a school readiness center was created. A new teacher evaluation system was instituted and increased student progress at the merged middle school; this resulted in the district receiving the Distinguished School award. Two schools have been identified as low performing and both have made progress and exceeded the state's growth target. The inclusion of this information and data from the district's lowest performing schools made it clear to understand the district's track record of success.

The district described how data on student progress is communicated through the following means: report cards; setting of personal student goals; an on-line parent portal (student information system); weekly department and team meetings; and customized student reports. An example is included in the appendix. Overall the district is very transparent with articulating its record of success and challenges which made this section strong.

(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	4

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The district uses its website for stakeholders to access information about the district's expenditures. A sample of the webpage is included in the appendix. The information includes: personnel salaries for instructional staff; teachers only; and actual non-personnel expenditures.   Total expenditures are also reported on each individual schools accountability report card annually that is also posted on the district's website. The only information that is not listed in the chart is the actual personnel salaries for support staff. There is insufficient information provided to determine whether the salaries for support staff are included on the schools' accountability report cards.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	10

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The district includes a clear description of the integration of state accountability measures into its RTT applilcation. It describes the Academic Performance Index that calculates performance on the California State Test and California Modified Assessment for students with disabilities. It describes the High School assessment and accountability system and targets. What is compelling was the district's explanation of its ability to exceed growth targets. It has had growth of 70 points over the past five years. Evidence of the district's communication with the State Board of Education to support sufficient autonomy, statutory, and regulatory requirements is included in the appendix section. The district noted that it contacted the state point of contact for review of the RTT application and the email included documents this information as well as the State's response that no further documentation was required and that the district had complied with their requirements. The other piece of evidence included in the appendix section is a letter from the California State Board of Education and California Department of Education. The letter states that they recieved a copy of the district's RTT application and that they assume that any LEA approved application in the RTT competition meets the state's laws.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	10

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The district provides a thorough explanation to describe how its stakeholders participated in the RTT application. There is clear evidence of collaboration. Engagement was done through the following: Board of Trustee discussion and study sessions; the District Advisory Committee; curriculum coach feedback sessions; RTT focus group comprised of all stakeholders; and city and school leadership meetings. The dates of the meetings are included along with a variety of letters of support for this grant. All groups are represented, including the collective bargaining group who had representation on some of the committees and also held discussions about the grant at their own meetings.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	3

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The district includes an explanation of how it arrived at identifying its student achievement needs. However, the district does not explain or list the identified needs and gaps that were identified. A list of improvements based on input from various meetings is included and supporting documents are also in the appendix. However, the district does not provide information on its current status in implementing personalized learning environments and connect this to its proposed reform methods.

C. Preparing Students for College and Careers (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	20

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

This section of the district's application includes specific information on how it plans to improve learning and teaching through a personalized learning environment. The district states that it uses the Common Core assessments; a variety of instructional approaches; and individual goal-setting to personalize student learning. The varied approaches to learning include: personalized growth and career pathways; college and career standards integrated into blended classrooms, virtual, and outdoor instruction; and interventions and accommodations for high-need students and students with disabilities. Student Learning Coaches will provide support to parents and teachers in the identification of appropriate instructional strategies and accommodations for high-needs students; and this information will be the basis for developing individual student goals. Ongoing assessments will be used by teachers and Learning Coaches to analyze student progress and assist with making changes to the students' personalized plans. If students have mastered content, they will be allowed to move on and new

content will be added. RTT funding will allow for the creation of Bright Future Centers that provide resources for families throughout the year, including the summer; provide coaching to parents and teaching on goal setting; and provide support with youth development.

The district will use RTT funds to support service learning projects based on student interests. This meets the criteria for providing flexibility in learning pathways and serves as a format for students to monitor their own learning and progress. The Bright Future Centers will have flexible hours and resources that parents can access. There will also be collaboration with environmental agencies to develop engaging blended learning programs. An explanation of the standards based report cards and personalized instructional sequence is included in the appendix which strengthens the district's explanation.

The district provides a clear explanation of how it will provide ongoing training and support to students as they navigate through their personalized learning pathway. Strengths Explorer is an electronic tool that will be used for students to map their individual learning plan. Anchor standards of specific skills, vocabulary, and math practices will be included in the students' plans, along with performance rubrics. Personalized reports will be available too so that students and parents can monitor progress and receive feedback.

The detailed descriptions in this section add clarity for how the district will support teaching and learning to prepare students for college and careers.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	20

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

In this section, the district provides a clear explanation of how it will support teachers and leaders to ensure students recieve quality instruction. An outline of support for administrators and teachers to create personalized learning environments is included in the appendix section. A descrition of how the district identified student strengths and needs is included. Data from the district's standards based report card and strength's finder assessment will be used to identify the students' current skills and talents; then, this info will be used to as a starting point for student goal setting. A thorough explanation is included of how it will build the capacity of teachers and leaders. Educator engagement and capacity building will be done through the implementation of Professional Learning Communities; tools for data analysis; and school leader and leadership training. Online professional development and networking will be available to teachers; data from adaptive assessments will provide teachers with data on students' skills that will be used to plan personalized learning; teachers will administer strengths based assessments to students to determine their interests and develop personalized learning plans; blended learning will incorporate student interest and needs; benchmark assessments will be administered to measure student progress and inform decisions for adjusting student programs; and a teacher and administrator evaluation system that includes supports for improving performance will be used to provide ongoing feedback to staff.

Clear evidence is provided in regards to specific processess and procedures that the district will use to them with providing effective learning environments. RTT funds will be used to contract with a vendor to provide training, tools and resources that enhance the district's current system for supporting teachers with creating personalized learning environments for students. A personal learning coach will assist the district in implementing the educator effectiveness system to support teachers with understanding how to accelerate student progress toward meeting standards. The superintendent and directors will serve as coaches for principals to provide ongoing support and feedback. The educator effectiveness system will serve as a systematic and strategic process for supporting leaders and teachers with structuring effective learning environments for students. It includes a completion, status, and results dashboard that informs these stakeholders where they stand with their professional development; where they are in their observation and evaluation process; and makes recommendations for professional development based on feedback that is inputted into the system from a formal observation. The district's evaluation system is used for measuring teacher effectiveness along with student achievement data; and the district and union representatives signed a memorandum of understanding (evidence included in the appendix) that outlines strategies and commitments to ensuring teachers and leaders are highly effective. An explanation of the district's current status and improvements planned for sections C1 a, b, and c is clearly explained and thus makes this section of the application strong.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	15

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The district includes a thorough description and explanation of its infrastructure. It explains the organization of three major departments and their roles and responsibilities: Department of Curriculum and Instruction; Department of Educational

Services; and Department of Business Services. The district clearly explains the role of school leaders and the flexibility for accelerating students based on their progress. School leadership teams have the autonomy to develop student achievement plans that align with the RTT grant. These plans will drive personalized learning and will be monitored by the major departments. Schools will also have oversight over the funds for their plans. Students will have flexibility to be accelerated if sufficient data warrants that this is in their best interest based on mastery of skills and content. This flexibility is aligned to the district's policy #5123 and a California Education Code that gives the district and School Board the authority to refine procedures related to student achievement when necessary. Students also have the opportunity to learn at their own pace to show mastery of standards and they can demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways. A clear explanation of learning resources and adaptations is included. The use of computer adaptive assessments will allow students to receive immediate feedback on their performance. Adopted curriculum materials will be purchased and made available to students with disabilities and English Language Learners.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	10

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The district includes a very clear explanation of how its infrastructure currently supports personalized learning and how it will make adjustments to its infrastructure to maximize personalized learning. The district explains that access to content will be provided to families through extended school hours and school year, as well as during the student day. Families will be able to sign out resources from the Bright Future Learning Centers which will have extended hours and literacy activities will take place in the evening at the centers too. Staff at the centers will provide support for: blended learning, professional development, personalized learning plans; and adult education. Service learning coordinators will also coordinate projects in collaboration with teachers, and the center librarians and administrators. The district will continue to use a student and staff server application called Student Information System where a variety of academic reports can be viewed and printed at any time. Access will be done through a secured web browser and/or mobile application. The distsrict includes a clear description of its data system. Its Student Information System is an inter-operable system that includes a student and parent portal where they can access real time information. It is a secured database that houses a variety of data on students (attendance, grades, personalized learning plans, and human resources data). The district will also utilize a California achievement data system to upload human resources, student information, and instructional data; while a county and state education data system will upload budget data that can be accesses by school personal and parents. A detailed action plan for enhancing the district's current policies and infrastructure is included too which supports the district in meeting the criteria for this section of its application.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	12

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The district includes some evidence of strategies for implemting a rigorous continous improvement process; however, this section could be strenghthened. Public feedback will continue to be generated through: District Advisory Meetings; monthly council meetings at schools; and Trimester City and Schools Together meetings. It states that these ongoing public sessions include: teachers, union representatives, administrators, parents, school board members, city council members and the superintendent. It states that RTT progress and improvement steps will be discussed through: Weekly teacher collaboration meetings; trimester academic conferences; trimester report and discussions between executive level staff; and trimester data-driven plans. Within these forums, student achievement data is reviewed and discussed, and next steps or goals are identified. Even though the district identifies structures for discussing student progress and RTT investments, there is insufficient information on how it will specifically monitor and measure each initiative in the grant, and share this information about its progress and planned improvements with stakeholders.

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	5

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The district has identified specific strategies for ongoing communication and engagement. These strategies include: the schools' website and district website; on-line surveys; the local news; community-based leaders; and trimester district advisory meetings. A table is included that outlines the strategies used for communication and engagement with students, parents, employess, and community members.

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	5

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The district provided a clear explanation of its performance measures for overall students and subgroups. The information is included in a table; and in the appendix section, there is a detailed chart that states each performance measure, rationale for selecting each measure, how the measure will provide timely information about student progress, and how the measure will be reviewed and improved over time. The minimum number of performance measures are included that address the applicable populations, academic skills, and non-cognitive skills.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	4

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The district includes an evaluation action plan to articulate how it will monitor the effectiveness of its RTT initiatives. The district's evaluation experts will work with an external evaluation company to evaluate the RTT grant. The district includes a letter from the outside evaluation company that articulates its support for working with the district to evaluate the grant; however, there is insufficient information regarding the actual roles and responsibilities of the company; the process it will use to evaluate the funded activities; and the process it will use to help the district improve its results.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	10

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The district provides a detailed budget plan that address each component of its RTT grant application. It identifies specific funds to support the project, reasonable funding allocations, and provides a clear rationale for funding each component of its initiatives. A budget table provides an overall summary of the allocation of grant funds. For each project that will be funded through the RTT grant, a detailed allocation chart is provided along with a detailed explanation of how the funding will be used. Within each explanation of the budget activities, the district states ongoing verse one time costs. It also makes reference to other funding sources such as other grants that it has recieved, federal education funds, or local revenue to fund some of the grant expenditures beyond the grant period.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	8

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The district provides an explanation and action plan of how it plans to sustain the goals of the grant after the grant has ended. Professional Learning Communities will be used to support the development of personalized learning plans. Middle school counselors will continue to support students with personlized plans toward college readiness too. Staff development will be done through existing resources in the district. The Blended Learning programs will be funded through state revenue, and another state grant will help to fund the after school programs. Federal dollars will continue to be used to fund continuous improvement efforts such as the online evaluation tool for teachers to monitor their personalized learning. However, their is insufficient information to determine if the district can continue with all of the RTT goals without sufficient funding; thus, if state grants, federal funds, and local revenue decreases, there is not information included to determine if the district can sustain its initiatives.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	10

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The district provides a detailed explanation of how the RTT grant is aligned to its outreach to the community to develop partnerships focused on personalized learning for students. They include a strategic plan of roles and committments for the partnerships with different organizations; the district has a wealth of existing partnerships that demonstrate a committment to focusing on the social-emotional needs of students, not just academic skills. The strategic plan is very well organized and it

clearly demonstrates that it is aligned to providing personalized learning environments beyond the academic setting. The population that the plan will focus on is identified (high-needs), along with specific outcomes; and, there is information that demonstrates the district's ability to scale the model beyond the participating students. An explanation of how data will be used to assess progress is included. A thorough explanation of the integration of services is included for each proposed program, as well as an explanation of professional development needed for staff. Also, an action plan for partnership integration is included along with the desired results. The plan includes clear performance goals, baseline data and targets through 2017, and a detailed budget. Information related to its outcomes, expectations, decision making structures, engagement of families and students, and means for assessing progress is included in the district's Galt Youth Mast Plan in the appendix section.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	**Met/Not Met**	**Met**

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The district's RTT grant application is very comprehensive and well organized. It includes a plethora of supporting documents in the body of the application and appendix that further clarifies its focus and plan for increasing personalized learning environments. Overall it provided explicit responses to each section of the grant and includes high-quality action plans that target closing the achievement gap and ensuring that students are college and career ready. There is a wealth of evidence that the initiatives will result in improved student progress based on the district's previous track record of success. It was clear and transparent with its student achievement needs and goals for improvement. The integration of absolute priority 1 is embedded throughout the application. As a result, the district has met the criteria for absolute priority 1.

	Available	Score
Total	**210**	**196**